

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION
CENTRAL COASTAL REGIONAL COMMISSION701 OCEAN STREET, ROOM 310
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January 10, 1979

William Swanberg
P.O. Box 103
El Granada, CA 94018

Dear Mr. Swanberg,

This letter is in response to your request for a report on the status of the Sewer Authority Mid-Coastside (SAM) projects with the Regional Coastal Commission. Currently, there are three SAM applications before the Commission for their consideration. One of the applications is for a reclamation line, one is for a transmission line to carry effluent from Granada and Montara to an ocean outfall at Half Moon Bay and one is for an ocean outfall to be constructed at Half Moon Bay which is to serve all three districts. The August SAM application for sewage treatment facilities has been withdrawn at the request of the applicant.

The following background information on the SAM project (recent chronology, LCP status, past permits), may be of some help to you in understanding the present status of the project(s).

CHRONOLOGY JULY 18 TO PRESENT

The SAM Board invited members of the Coastal Commission and staff of the Commission Regional Water Quality Control Board and State Water Resources Board to meet with them in an informal public forum to discuss the SAM projects. The meeting was held on July 20, 1978 in Half Moon Bay and was attended by several Regional Coastal Commissioners including the Chairman, Mary Henderson and all of the other Commissioners from San Mateo County. A lengthy discussion of the status of the SAM projects and possible alternatives ensued. The position of the various agencies (SAM, RWQCB, SWRB, CCZC) were put forward for discussion. Public comment was also taken at this meeting. Coastal Commissioners present indicated to the SAM Board that they were pleased to informally discuss the SAM situation and Coastal Act Policies but that it would be inappropriate for them to suggest specific solutions or support specific proposals as the projects would ultimately be before them for formal consideration.

Commission staff met with the SAM manager and attorney on July 28, 1978 to discuss potential SAM projects (i.e., single regional plant, construction of outfall only, phased project of some type separate plants, etc.) The object of the meeting was to review Commission filing requirements for each of the potential projects that the SAM Board was considering. During this lengthy

meeting, Coastal Commission regulations relative to Sewage Treatment Plant construction were discussed in detail. Existing information for the various alternatives was reviewed and new information that would likely be needed to meet filing requirements was outlined. The status of the existing coastal permits (P-77-366 & P-77-816) for the on shore facilities (consolidated plant, transmission lines, pump stations, etc.) and the outfall and reclamation lines were also reviewed with the SAM staff present. They indicated that they would relay the information to their Board and would return with an application for one of the alternatives discussed the next week. Commission staff indicated they would attempt to expedite the application as much as possible within the requirements of Commission regulations.

An application for an up-grading of the Montara and Half Moon Bay sewer plants, construction of a new secondary plan for Granada, new ocean outfall and reclamation lines was received in the Commission offices on August 14, 1978. After a thorough review of the material submitted, the supporting environmental and other project documents previously submitted for the original proposal in 1977, and study of the applicable regulations, staff determined that the application was incomplete and could not be legally filed. A letter, explaining in detail the specific areas of deficiency was sent to the applicant on September 12, 1978. A copy of this letter is included for your information. On October 24, 1978, most of the missing information was delivered to the Commission office. Staff reviewed the new material with the SAM manager and advised him that the application could be filed as soon as the one remaining document, a note from the applicant indicating a waiver of the normal time constraints, was brought in. (Coastal Commission Regulations Section 13654).

In the meantime Commission staff, at the request of the staff of the Regional Water Quality Control Board attended a meeting on the subject of SAM in Oakland on October 31, 1978. Representatives from the State Water Resources Board, RWQCB, and each of the SAM Districts were also in attendance. The purpose of the meeting was to explore possibilities for a phased project which would take care of the current outfall problems (location in the case of Montara and Granadas and disrepair in the case of Half Moon Bay) and defer the question of on-shore facilities to a later date. A commitment to explore this possibility was made by the various parties and all agreed to meet again on November 14, 1978 to determine whether or not a phased project would be feasible and fundable.

Because of a SWRB staff member's illness, the November 14th meeting was rescheduled to November 30, 1978 in Oakland. On that, representatives from the SAM Board and staff and staff members of the Regional Water Quality Board, State Water Resources Board and the Regional Coastal Commission again met to discuss a phased SAM project. It was determined at that meeting that a phased project would be pursued by SAM. The first phase would include the construction of a transmission line, ocean outfall and reclamation line. SAM representatives present indicated they would submit applications for these projects to the Regional Coastal Commission in the near future. SAM representatives indicated they would prefer to put off the question of sewage treatment capacity and thus construction of new sewage treatment facilities until the Local Coastal Plans, currently under preparation, showed population projections for the Mid-Coast areas served by the three districts. Agency staff agreed with this course as long as all needed new facilities, including treatment

plants, were operational by July, 1983. I have included a copy of the letter written by Ray Walsh of the SWRB as additional information on the November 30, 1978 meeting. A list of those attending the meeting and informal Commission staff notes are in our files and will be made available to you if you wish.

On December 19, 1978, three separate SAM applications were submitted to the Regional Coastal Commission. These applications (Reclamation Line, Ocean Outfall and Transmission Line) were reviewed by Commission staff and found to be incomplete. The SAM manager was advised of the deficiencies on December 27, 1978 and submitted some of the missing items on January 5, 1979. The applications will be filed soon and will be scheduled for their first public hearing in February, the exact date and location for the hearing should be set by January 15, 1979. If you would like notice of the time and location of the hearing on these proposals, please write or call the Coastal Commission Office in Santa Cruz.

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In summary, the SAM Board has decided to proceed with a phased approach to the sewage treatment and conveyance facilities project. This method of dealing with the project has been conditionally agreed to by the staff of the Regional Water Quality Control Board and the State Water Resources Board who have authority over projects of this type. The staff of the Coastal Commission has also agreed to process applications for the project either separately in phases or as a unit. Three separate SAM applications for the first phase of the total SAM project are now filed with the Regional Commission.

LOCAL COASTAL PLAN UPDATE

The preparation of Local Coastal Plans consistent with the Coastal Act of 1976 for the areas served by the three SAM districts should greatly aid in the resolution of the "capacity" question as it relates to proposed sewage treatment facilities. The Land Use plans of the LCP's should provide clear direction on the amount of new development and projected population for the Mid-Coastside and thus the level of public services, such as sewage treatment, which will be needed. Since the timing of new sewage treatment facilities appears to be tied to the LCP's, it would likely be helpful to have an understanding of when these plans may be completed. The following summary is provided.

San Mateo County LCP: San Mateo County has the responsibility for preparing the Local Coastal Plan for Montara, Moss Beach, Princeton/Pillar Point Harbor and El Granada as well as the remainder of the unincorporated Coastal Zone in the County. The Sanitation Districts included in San Mateo County's planning area are all of Montara Sanitation District and much of Granada Sanitation District.

Upon Coastal Commission approval of their work program, in March of 1978 San Mateo County received State Federal funding in the amount of \$156,000 to prepare their LCP. They have been working steadily on this project since that time and plan to finish the LCP by this summer. It is likely that they will meet their schedule for completion.

City of Half Moon Bay, Local Coastal Plan: The City of Half Moon Bay has the responsibility for the preparation of the LCP for those lands within their

incorporated boundaries. Half Moon Bay Sanitation District and a portion of the Granada District are included in the City's planning area.

A Work Program, which outlines coastal issues, work needed to prepare a LCP, Budget needs etc., was the subject of a Commission hearing in late September 1978. Based on comments by the public, Commission and staff, the Work Program is currently in the process of being revised by the city. Further public hearings before the Commission and funding are hoped for in February to March of this year. Although the city is getting into the Coastal planning process somewhat later than San Mateo County, they may, by virtue of smaller areas, fewer, less complex issues etc, be able to do some "catching up" to the county. Under favorable circumstances, it is not inconceivable to project an autumn or winter, 1979 completion date for Half Moon Bay's LCP.

PAST COMMISSION ACTION ON SAM PROJECTS

Although only of historical interest at this point, it seems useful to offer a summary of Coastal Commission actions on past SAM proposals.

P-77-366 CONSOLIDATED SEWAGE TREATMENT FACILITY, 2.0 MGD

The Coastal Commission in August of 1977 approved a permit for the construction of a consolidated Sewage Treatment Plant at Half Moon Bay, transmission lines to bring untreated effluent from Granada and Montara to the new plant, pump stations and an office for the Granada Sanitation District. One of the conditions attached to this permit limited the capacity of the new plant to 1.3 MGD until such time as the Local Coastal Plans were certified and indicated a greater capacity was needed. The size of the transmission lines was not limited for the very practical reason that should a larger capacity be desirable in the future, it would be environmentally damaging and expensive to have to dig up several miles of buried pipe. The Commission felt that limiting the plant capacity would be adequate assurance that the preparation of the LCP's would not be predetermined. Incidentally, current average daily flows for all three districts total slightly less than 1 million gallons per day (.92 MGD) according to the most recent data from Pat Kwok of the Regional Water Quality Control Board. The chart below indicates the breakdown for the individual SAM districts.

AVERAGE CURRENT FLOWS

<u>DISTRICT</u>	<u>JUNE/78</u>	<u>JULY/78</u>	<u>AUGUST/78</u>	<u>AVERAGE</u>	<u>TOTAL AVERAGE FLOW</u>
MONTARA	.18MGD	.17MGD	.18MGD	.18	.18 MONTARA
GRANADA	.32MGD	.32MGD	.30MGD	.31	.31 GRANADA
HALF MOON BAY	.41MGD	.45MGD	.45MGD	.43	.43 HALF MOON BAY
					<u>.92 MGD</u>

For purposes of comparison, the pre-drought flows for the three districts are shown on the following table:

AVERAGE FLOWS, SUMMER 1975

<u>COMBINED SAM DISTRICTS</u>	<u>JUNE/75</u>	<u>JULY/75</u>	<u>AUGUST/75</u>	<u>TOTAL AVERAGE FOR JUNE/JULY/AUGUST/75</u>
(MSD, GSD, & HMB)	.85MGD	.82MGD	.89	.85

The average flow for the entire year was .96 due, according to Mr. Kwok to high flows during the rainy months of January and February of 1975.

P-77-816 OCEAN OUTFALL AND RECLAMATION LINE

On August 18, 1978 an application for the ocean outfall and reclamation portion of the SAM project was submitted to the Commission. Because the Half Moon Bay outfall was in existence and in good repair, SAM requested a new outfall sized to accommodate only the Montara and Granada discharges. They anticipated continued use of the existing outfall to accommodate Half Moon Bay's flows. Since no one knew that the Half Moon Bay outfall would break on March 23, 1978, the outfall size proposed by the applicant was approved by the Commission on December 12, 1977. A condition was attached to this permit which tied the discharge to the approved plant capacity. Therefore, although the outfall, like the transmission lines previously approved, could physically accommodate more than a 1.3 MGD average dry weather flow, its capacity was restricted by regulatory condition until Local Coastal Plans indicating a higher capacity were certified. The larger outfall was allowed for the same reason that the larger transmission lines were allowed; i.e., environmental damage that might be caused by replacement and economics.

In summary, the Commission has acted on each application filed by SAM (On-Shore Facilities, P-77-366, August 1977 and Outfall/Reclamation Line P-77-816, December 1977). Both of these permits were approved, however the permit for the on-shore facilities was not accepted by SAM and has lapsed. The out-fall permit was accepted but has also lapsed.

Thank you for your interest in this matter. If you would like to learn more about this rather complicated project, I would urge you to visit our offices and review the extensive files on this subject. If you would like an appointment to discuss the SAM projects with one of the staff familiar with them, please feel free to call Diane Landry, Mike Miller or Susan Hansch.

Yours truly,



EDWARD Y. BROWN
Executive Director

cc: All Commissioners
Neil Dunham
Fred Dierker
SAM Board
Fred Mortensen